

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2104

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ICRC, MO, AG
SUBJ: ICRC VISIT TO MOROCCO

REF: GENEVA 5232

1. THERE HAS THUS FAR BEEN NO PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AN AGREEMENT ALLOWING THE ICRC TO VISIT "POLISARIO" PRISONERS HELD IN MOROCCO (REFTEL). AFTER HIS APRIL 6 MEETING WITH KING HASSAN, ICRC PRESIDENT HAYS WAS QUOTED AS EXPECTING A NEW ROUND OF VISITS BY ICRC REPRESENTATIVES TO "ALGERIAN PRISONERS" HERE WITHIN THE COMING WEEK. THIS TERMINOLOGY COULD ENCOMPASS POLISARIO CAPTIVES WHOM THE MOROCCANS HAVE OFTEN CHARACTERIZED AS "REGULAR ALGERIAN ARMY COMMANDOS." HOWEVER, AN APRIL 7 EDITORIAL IN SEMI-OFFICIAL AL MAGHRIB ON THE SUBJECT REFERRED ONLY TO THE 101 REGULAR ALGERIAN PRISONERS, MOSTLY CAPTURED AT AMGHALA IN JANUARY 1976. MR. HAY REPORTEDLY MADE A VISIT TO THE MOROCCAN PORTION OF THE SAHARA APRIL 7 AND LEFT MOROCCO ON THE 8TH.

2. IN HIS APRIL 6 REMARKS TO THE PRESS, HAYS ALSO NOTED THAT:
-- HE AND THE KING HAD DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF ARRANGING REGULAR VISITS TO PRISONERS HELD IN MOROCCO, ALGERIA AND
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MAURITANIA;
-- AN ICRC DELEGATION WAS CURRENTLY IN TINDOUF PREPARING TO VISIT MOROCCAN (AND MAURITANIAN) PRISONERS HELD IN THAT AREA;
-- THE ICRC HAD HAD LITTLE PROBLEM IN GAINING ACCESS TO THE "ALGERIAN PRISONERS" HELD IN MOROCCO AND HAD ALREADY VISITED THEM REGULARLY SINCE THEIR CAPTURE.

3. MOROCCAN EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS FOCUSED ON THE NEED FOR ICRC REPS IN ALGERIA TO BEWARE OF ALGERIAN DECEPTION WHILE VISITING THE CAMPS "OF THE SO-CALLED POLISARIO." THE SEMI-OFFICIAL MOROCCAN PRESS URGED THE ICRC TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY OF THEIR ALGERIAN VISIT TO INVESTIGATE THE CONDITION OF THE "5000" MOROCCANS DETAINED IN "CONCENTRATION CAMP LIKE" CONDITIONS IN THE TINDOUF AREA.
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